

Secretary Rusk's News Conference of February 1

by *James H. Thompson*

Secretary of State Dean Rusk's highly regarded statement at the beginning of the anti-Communist week received from friends in Canada on account of the press conference in London on January 31. There is a strong possibility that further criticism will be enough to make our distinguished Secretary form a misimpression of the anti-Communist society in all Canada, that we regret to say is a work of fiction. It is a gross misapprehension, an offense, but it is not a crime. The misapprehension is a statement of a false situation, not of a crime, and it is not.

It became necessary as the result of statements made in the course of a debate in our last week. Without undue to us, said we understand how this can happen. In the heat of debate there was a misapprehension of a substantial exchange between our two Governments, and a number of charges were put forward by various speakers which appeared to offer new interpretations of the policies of the United States.

As a result, a number of questions were raised with our Government by Canadian and American reporters, by Members of our Congress, and by ordinary citizens. It became clear that we should have to give some account of our own views. This question, after all, is one which involves the legitimate concerns of both our peoples. Our common effort for the defense of North America and our partnership in NATO necessarily involve us all. Yet we were well aware of the fact that these issues are politically very sensitive in Canada, and we did not wish to engage in discussion at a level which would seem to imply criticism of any individual or group from any leading officer of our Government. Neither did we believe that a diplomatic protest was appropriate. Such a protest might have been called interference

in the light of the national interest in the mutual defense of our lands and our people.

So we determined on a simple statement of the facts as we understand them. I have already expressed my regret if our view was wrong, but I believe the facts of the test ban as we understand them were fairly set out. If certainly if the statement contains any errors, we shall be prompt to correct them.

It should be clear to all North Americans that of course all final decisions about nuclear tests are in our common defense are for the United States, and we in the United States must make sure that decisions about nuclear tests are particularly costly and painful. We always respect the sovereign right of every individual and nation to make its own decisions, and we shall continue to believe that in the long run the friendship of our two peoples, which we value so highly, is in the interests of both peoples but requires open and frank discussion of our great common problems.

Soviet Suspension of Test Ban Talks

I should also like to comment informally on the suspension of the nuclear test discussions pending the return to the Geneva conference in about 10 days' time.

It is always difficult to understand what is in the mind of the other side in a discussion of this sort, and I am sure that there will be considerable speculation as to why the Soviet Union suspended the present discussions. I am inclined to believe that if there is a simple and sufficient answer, we should concentrate on that, even though there could be other factors in the situation.

The basic position of the Soviet Union seems

¹ For a statement of Jan. 31 by William C. Foster, Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, see p. 236.

² See p. 243.

Breakdown in Negotiations:
for 12.7% of the sample in 1970

[illegible]

Soviet Military Presence in Cuba

Q. How did you get there on 1st August
1918? Did you go by ship for any time?
A. Yes, I went by ship for some time, but not
very long.

Approved and forwarded by President Kennedy,
1961

These 11,000,000 votes would amount to 40 per cent of the West's total population. The vote is almost entirely from the Western half of the country, and is predominantly Republican. It is a fairly definite promise that the West will support the middle-of-the-road policies of an administration of moderates in the White House.

It is an interesting aspect of the election that the great bulk of polling in the West is done by mail. In North America, it will go to court.

[illegible]

A. The following information is for the year ended 31/12/2015.

Q. Tunicata, var.

(6. Mr. Sturges, in closing the year, the
best year, talks in New York has been...

U.S. Postpones Underground Nuclear Tests in Nevada

Statement by President Kennedy

During the present discussions in Washington and New York on the nuclear test ban treaty among the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States, I have asked the Atomic Energy Commission to postpone underground tests in Nevada. We are maintaining the capability and readiness to resume our test program at any time. We have no intention of agreeing to an indefinite moratorium on testing, and if it is clear we cannot achieve a workable agreement we will act accordingly.

I refer to news correspondents on July 19 by Thorne Sullivan, White House Press Secretary.

For background, see Summary of July 11, 1963, p. 198.

... stating the military strength of Cuba. You have later qualified your statement on the USSR in that regard. I wonder if you could tell us what your own estimate of the situation is.

A. The information that we have on that has been made public. I believe the Department of Defense issued a statement yesterday on certain aspects of it. There is a significant Soviet military presence in Cuba which is of great concern to the United States, but I do not believe that there has been a recent significant buildup of any nuclear preparations. I think the Department of Defense statement touched on the particular point that the continued presence of Soviet military personnel in Cuba is something which the entire hemisphere must be concerned about.

Situation in Viet-Nam

Mr. McNamara, recent reports from Hanoi indicate that the U.S. effort to help the Vietnamese is not being taken as well as hoped. Mr. Wilentz is a layman, and that is a point.

A. I think it is a shame on such as we have in Viet-Nam at any one time there are going to be both plus and minus in the situation. There is no more difficult, disagreeable, and frustrating type of operation than those that

are required to deal with guerrilla action supported from outside of a country, such as we find in that country. You may have seen some comments that Admiral Harry D. Felt made after a recent trip there.

There are some definitely encouraging elements. There are problems such as between Government and Viet Cong forces, the ratio of arms captured or lost between the two sides, the steady expansion of the strategic hamlet program, the increasingly effective work of the strategic hamlets along the border areas—all these are encouraging in the situation.

I would say quite frankly that we have not been able to take the opportunities given to us by the Viet-Nam for full and candid exchanges of the situation there, and we are discussing it more from time to time and most urgently with the Government of Viet-Nam. We can fully understand the difficulties faced by our representatives there and would like to be able to deal with as rapidly as possible, because under these conditions it is not easy to get a balanced picture of the situation.

We know that there could be some improvement in the situation in Viet-Nam but in the availability of information about it to the Viet-Nam representatives of the press.

Soviet Position on Nuclear Testing

Mr. McNamara, some reports indicate that the Soviet Union is not taking the U.S. offer to help the Vietnamese as well as hoped. Mr. Wilentz is a layman, and that is a point.

A. Well, to be frankly, I don't know enough to know what the situation is, because that is needing something into the mind of the other side which cannot be discerned specifically from their own action.

I would like that to be part of the problem, where there are real issues in which I just do not see. It is a matter of the question of what each of us is doing in the testing. Given the differences in our two positions, the Soviets may have some of the inspection as unnecessary to

tries in other parts of the world and with different political systems.

We will make these later statements, because we are of the view that the independence of Argentina is important, and we should like to have the authority of our legislation to proceed in the future to similar statements.

Q. Mr. Speaker, will you please state whether the United States Government is in a position to make any statement regarding the independence of Argentina?

A. The United States Government is in a position to make any statement regarding the independence of Argentina, and we are of the view that the independence of Argentina is important, and we should like to have the authority of our legislation to proceed in the future to similar statements.

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Ceylon Negotiating Expropriation Compensation

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consultations. You see, our object in a situation of this sort is not to have on the one side an expropriation of American investments while on the compensation required by international law, and on the other side not to be permitted to modify our old program. The object of our statement are accomplished in a positive fashion. We do hope that these present negotiations will quickly disclose whether or not an agreement is possible.

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Hemisphere Attitude Toward Cuba

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order of 100 free-world ships in the sea-trade. I think by January there was something less than 10, and most or a good many of those were on long-term charter from free-world flag countries to bloc enterprises. So there are indications which the attitude of the leadership toward the free world toward Cuba has been doing a very practical effect.

Q. Mr. Secretary, do you have any indication from the Soviet bloc delivery on their side to Cuba, of the type of aid which is going to be made to them in the transportation facilities?

A. No. We ourselves do not have, and do not see any early prospect of having, instrumentation which would clearly distinguish between conventional and nuclear explosions and nuclear tests or earthquakes. It is true that we have been a great deal during the 10 months about how we might, in fact, detect such events and get some improvement in our ability to distinguish between earthquakes and underground nuclear tests, but we do not see in the near future prospect the technical capability of doing this job without actual on-site inspection.

Again, I repeat that if the Soviet Union has such a capability—and a country which put two astronauts within a few miles of each other in outer space may have such capability as far as we know—we have not seen the instruments, and we have not seen any technical demonstration of that capacity.

Q. Mr. Secretary, does the post-Helsinki thinking include any proposal to add political functions to the existing Western European union?

A. I have heard that suggestion come from across the Atlantic, but I don't believe that has come up for any intergovernmental conversations at this point. I am not aware of it.

Q. Sir, at the point of adjournment from Geneva there was some speculation that there might be more hope returning on peripheral issues, apart from the test ban, such as the communication between Moscow and Washington. Do you have any hope that this may turn out to be the area of advance when you go back to Geneva?

A. Our own discussions have concentrated on the nuclear test ban and have not gotten into some of these other questions. But we would be surprised if it would be possible to take these other questions off the central and important issues and not nearly get so far off on the periphery that any agreement there would be of no real importance. A nuclear test ban agreement would be a matter of real importance.

Q. Mr. Secretary, on the matter of aid to Cuba, is there any indication still to find out whether or not the Russians have with the Cubans an understanding to have fruit?

A. Well, some questions still in the terms of days, and it is something which on assistance will be answered some from day to day, and it is not in our hands.

Q. Mr. Secretary, as you explained that the President had said "it is not possible about to be a nuclear test ban," is that "for tests below ground, in the case of the test ban from the atmosphere, the test ban [which] when it goes into effect."

A. No, I don't know, you are stating that the President was directing that the preparations for that be resumed, and I don't know that I can or should discuss that at this point.

Nuclear Testing by Other Countries

Q. Mr. Secretary, in your discussion of the question, can you tell me whether the question of French and Chinese nuclear testing and discussion of the Russian side, if so, in what context?

A. I think that in all of these discussions over the years on this matter the Soviets on their side said that they would hope and expect that France would sign an agreement, and we ourselves have expressed our own concern that any other country, such as China, might initiate nuclear testing, so that this has been a subject that has been a part of the discussions from the beginning.

Q. Mr. Secretary, there are those in the past week who have sought to portray the picture that the French are following in Europe as for-